Jumping the Gun

In an editorial headed "Too Much Talk on Oswald," The New York Times last week opened up discussion on a worrisome topic. Confidence in the Warren commission's investigation of President Kennedy's assassination, the Times said, is being undermined by the "spate of advance disclosures on what [the commission's] report is likely to say."

Two incidents prompted the editorial: the appearance in The Dallas Morning News of Lee Harvey Oswald's Russian diary and Robert Kennedy's statement in Poland last week that "there is no question" Oswald killed his brother and that "it was the single act of an individual protesting against society."

But the editorial also referred to a long page-one piece the Times itself ran five weeks ago. By Anthony Lewis, the paper's able Supreme Court reporter, the story reported the commission would say "that the President was killed by one man acting alone, Lee H. Oswald."

The wrist slap initiated some polite internecine debate at the Times. Lewis and James Reston, his boss in the Washington bureau, refused to comment, but Harrison Salisbury, the Times national editor and the man who assigned the story, allowed that the editorial was "a little tart."

Leak: The premature appearance of the Oswald diary caused considerably more stir. SECRET DIARY, OSWALD'S THOUGHTS BARED, said the News in a page-one headline over a four-column, 10-inch-deep reproduction of the first entries—including an account of an attempted suicide—Oswald made in the crudely hand-printed record he kept in the Soviet Union from 1959 to 1962. The copyrighted story, which filled eight columns inside, carried the by-line of News reporter Hugh Aynesworth, and was spread worldwide by the wire services.

It was also a source of considerable embarrassment to the Warren commission, which last week asked the FBI to find out how the 32-year-old Aynesworth got his copy. But when two agents visited the News city room, the stocky Aynesworth was predictably close-mouthed. "I didn't get it from an individual, but from a place," was all he would say to an interviewer. Critics of Dallas assumed that the copy came from the police or district attorney. Another possible source was Marina Oswald and her lawyer. All denied it. This much is known: several publications, including, indirectly, NEWSWEEK, were offered the diary for $1,000 or more.

The Warren commission plans to publish its full report, including the diary, next month. No doubt the seller realized that his hot property would be worthless when the world got the final, unfragmented, authoritative statement on the Kennedy assassination.

They carried it well

Required Reading

U.S. television critics have one thing in common—they have been as successful in changing network programing as the Eighteenth Amendment was in altering alcoholic intake. Still, the industry reads them avidly and no one more than cigar-smoking George Rosen, who has covered the TV beat for Variety, the show-business weekly, since before Milton Berle was invented in the late '40s. "Variety is a lot like Telstar," says Rosen, expansively. "Our stories bounce off into papers across the country."

A tall, baldish man with the kindly countenance of a neighborhood candy-store owner, the 57-year-old Rosen has a typewriter that seldom dispenses Tootsie Rolls. In a piece last week packed with fresh facts (and some clichés), he chastised stations for not dropping lucrative cigarette advertising after the Surgeon General's report linked smoking to cancer. "The reason, of course," said Rosen, "lies in the fact that the broadcasters' devotion to the

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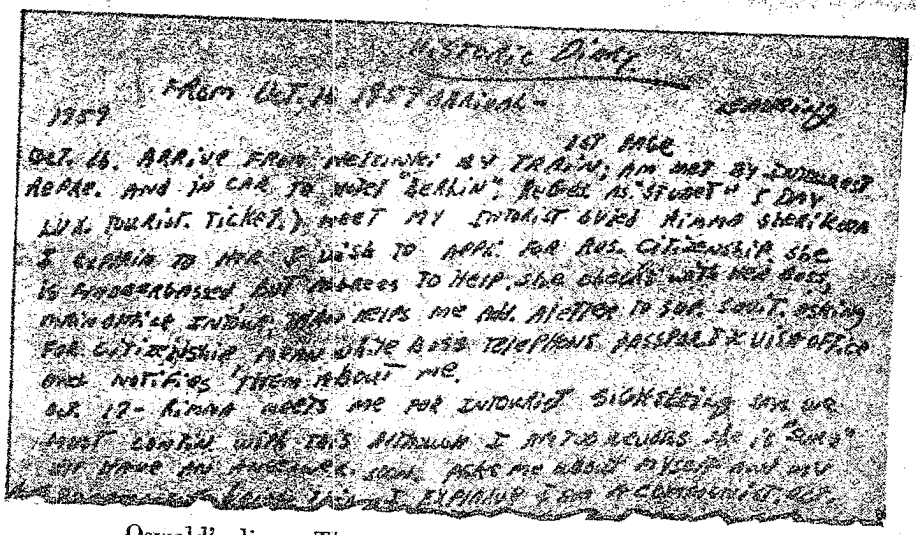

Historic Diary

From Oct. 16 1959 Arrival - Leaving

1959

1st page

Oct. 16. Arrive from Helsinki by train; am met by Intourist repre. and in car to hotel "Berlin", rubbed as "Studet" 5 day lux. tourist. ticket.) meet my Intourist guide Rimma Sherikova I explain to her I wish to apply for Rus. citizenship she is embarrassed but agrees to help. She checks with her boss, main office Intour. Then helps me add. a letter to Sup. Soviet asking for citizenship. Meanwhile boss telephones passport & visa office and notifies them about me.

Oct. 17 - Rimma meets me for Intourist sightseeing. Says we must contin. with this although I am too nervous she is "sure" [illegible] Asks me about myself and my [illegible] I explain I am a communist, etc.

Oswald's diary: The price was high for his Soviet years